



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

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**SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT TO EXAMINE
FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAMS FOR SPORT FISH AND WILDLIFE
RESTORATION**

The Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director John Turner today announced the agency will be preparing a supplemental environmental impact statement on two major Federal grant programs to the States supporting sport fish and wildlife restoration.

In 1978, the Service published a programmatic environmental impact statement (EIS) examining programs instituted by the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act of 1950 (Dingell-Johnson Act) and the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937 (Pittman-Robertson Act). That document covered a planning period of 10 years and suggested a fresh look at the Federal Aid programs' impacts in another 10 years.

"The Service's Federal Aid program with the States represents one of this country's most important and successful partnerships to benefit fish and wildlife and their habitat," Turner said. "Almost \$300 million annually is provided from Federal Aid funds to the States to enable them to carry out programs that not only go to help these resources, but also to expand outdoor recreational opportunities for all Americans."

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Through the two programs, Federal funds from excise taxes on arms, ammunition, archery equipment, fishing rods, certain other fishing tackle, and motorboat fuel are provided to State fish and game agencies for use in fish and wildlife restoration and management. The funds are apportioned to each State according to its land area, population, and the number of hunting and fishing licenses it sells. Projects to be funded are selected by the State but must be approved by the Service. When approved, the State is reimbursed for up to 75 percent of project costs.

Since 1978, the Wildlife Restoration program has remained essentially the same, except for the fact that revenue has grown from \$67.8 million in 1978 to \$126.5 million in 1989. Substantial changes, however, have taken place in the Sport Fish Restoration Program as a result of the passage of the Wallop-Breaux amendment in 1984. Wallop-Breaux expanded the list of taxable items to include motorboat fuels and import duties on pleasure boats, and included interest earned by these funds prior to allocation to the States.

Wallop-Breaux funds have enabled the States to expand their range of activities to include developing and upgrading boating access facilities and providing aquatic education programs. Revenues under the Sport Fish Restoration Act increased from about \$26.3 million in 1978 (prior to Wallop-Breaux) to \$186.7 million in 1989 (including Wallop-Breaux revenue).

The supplemental EIS will examine the impacts of the two programs on populations of big and small game, migratory game birds, sport fish, nongame fish and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, on land, air and water quality, soils, and economic conditions. It will also consider several alternatives to current programs.

A public scoping meeting is to be held on February 8, 1991, at 9:00 a.m., at the Ramada Renaissance Hotel, 950 North Stafford Street, Arlington, Virginia.

Written comments on the notice are also invited and must be received no later than February 21, 1991. Comments should be addressed to the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street NW., Mail Stop 322 Arlington Square, Washington, DC 20240. For additional information, contact Columbus Brown, chief, Division of Federal Aid, or Tom Taylor, wildlife biologist, at 703-358-2156. The notice appeared in the January 3, 1991, Federal Register.